



# WELCOME

## *Trailblazer Sponsors*

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*Scott Walker*

OFFICE OF THE LT. GOVERNOR

*Rebecca Kleefisch*



Women's Council  
· Wisconsin ·



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Certification Program



WISCONSIN  
**WOMEN'S  
BUSINESS  
INITIATIVE**  
CORPORATION

### **Trailblazer Award Committee**

Mary Jo Baas, Chair  
Liberty House Consulting  
Chair, Wisconsin Women's Council

Carol Dunn  
Women's Business Enterprise  
(WBE) Certification Program,  
WI Department of Administration

Sue Ann Kaestner  
The Widget Source

Christine Lidbury  
Wisconsin Women's Council

Representative Sandy Pasch  
Wisconsin State Assembly  
Wisconsin Women's Council

Vickie Wenzel  
Target Commercial Interiors

*Trailblazer logo by Sever Graphic Design,  
a woman-owned business located in Oregon, WI.*

Governor Scott Walker, Lt. Governor Rebecca Kleefisch, the sponsoring organizations, and the Trailblazer Committee are pleased to honor the recipients of the 2012 Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business.

The Governor's Trailblazer Awards recognize the rich legacy and deep roots of women's business ownership in Wisconsin. Categories include Torch Awards honoring generational family-owned businesses; Business Pioneer Awards honoring businesses that have been woman-owned for 25-years or more; and Special Recognition Awards offered in partnership with the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC). This award program honors women who have worked against the odds to start and sustain businesses, and bring their vision, talent and expertise to the marketplace—building our economy and making the community a better place.

The fourteen 2012 Trailblazer recipients come from across Wisconsin. They represent businesses both large and small, and a wide range of industries—including non-traditional industries for women. These businesses have sustained families and anchored communities. We are excited to recognize the success of these business leaders whose work has carved a path for women business owners today.

*Congratulations on your success!*

# Business Pioneer Awards

## Donna Gray | AWARDS MALL

Founded in 1977, Awards Mall started in a garage that had been re-purposed into a showroom. Donna soon found that helping people to say “Congratulations!”, “Thank You!” and “Good Job!” was right up her alley. Following a mission to provide high quality recognition and appreciation products, the company has grown to one of the largest in the industry. It has received many awards, including the Dane County Small Business Excellence Award, and the Sam Walton Award for Business Excellence. The company gives back to the community with their “Volunteer of the Day Program” and “Best in Business Award.” Donna is a member of The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce, TEMPO Madison, and the Awards & Recognition Association. *Nominated by Jennifer Alexander, The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce and Dana Zurbuchen, Dana Zurbuchen, LLC.*

**Awards Mall / Total  
Awards & Promotions  
7475 Mineral Point Road  
Madison, WI 53717  
608.833.1716  
www.awardsmall.com**

## Jean Lee & Karin Lee-Fournier

### BADGER TRAILER & EQUIPMENT CORPORATION

Badger Trailer & Equipment Corp., doing business as Thermo King of Southeast Wisconsin, was founded in the 1920s and has been woman-owned since 1981. It has evolved from semi-trailer repair and body modification in the 1920's to the first Thermo King dealer in 1945 with L.E. Lubbers and, later, Gordon Lee, son-in-law. In 2006 Badger Trailer expanded into Sheboygan, added four mobile repair trucks and moved into a new state of the art facility built along I-94 in Racine County under the leadership of Jean Lee, daughter of L.E. Lubbers, and Karin Lee-Fournier, granddaughter. Badger Trailer is a full service provider for trailer and transport refrigeration repair. *Nominated by Senator Van Wanggaard & Representative Robin Vos.*

**Badger Trailer &  
Equipment Corporation  
2738 N. Sylvania Ave.  
Franksville, WI 53126  
262.835.9901  
www.tksewisconsin.com**

## **DIRECTIONS MARKETING | Kristine R. Sexton**

Founded in 1955 and woman-owned since 1985, Directions Marketing offers more than a half century of experience connecting clients' brands and services with their customers. Directions is a full-service integrated marketing communications and packaging agency that offers package design, strategic planning and development, classic communications, internet marketing, and public relations and social media services to local, regional and national businesses. The agency traces its roots to a design agency founded by Sexton's father, Russell Mueller. Sexton started working with the company during semester breaks while attending college and began working full-time for the agency in 1976 and bought the agency following her father's retirement. *Nominated by Representative Dean Kaufert.*

**Directions Marketing**  
**600 South Commercial Ave.**  
**Neenah, WI 54956**  
**1.800.236.2189**  
**[www.directions.com](http://www.directions.com)**

## **DRAKE & COMPANY | Kelly Starr-King**

Founded in 1978, Drake & Company's top priority is ensuring that stellar talent is matched with the area's best employers. The group's business savvy, life experiences, and warmth and compassion help them excel at recognizing talent, character, and full potential. Their extensive involvement in the community has also given them a firsthand perspective of the kind of people it takes to make the business community flourish. Kelly is also proud to serve as Founder/President of their newest community project, LIGHTS ON THE LAKE Boat Parade & Fireworks! Now in its 4th year (Sunday of Labor Day Weekend), LIGHTS ON THE LAKE showcases area businesses and raises funds to help maintain the beauty of our lakes in a way that displays Madison's creativity through wholesome entertainment for all ages. *Nominated by Jennifer Alexander, The Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce.*

**Drake & Company**  
**660 West Washington Ave.**  
**Madison, WI 53703**  
**608.698.8000**  
**[www.drakeandcompany.com](http://www.drakeandcompany.com)**

# Business Pioneer Awards

## Lorraine Gersek & Diane Bisick | ED GERSEK, INC.

**Ed Gersek, Inc.**  
**477 N. Ronsman Road**  
**Green Bay, WI 54311**  
**920.468.0345**  
**[www.gersek.com](http://www.gersek.com)**

Ed Gersek Inc. was co-founded in 1963 by Lorraine and Edmund Gersek. The company has been woman-owned and operated since 1980 and is now owned by their daughter Diane M. Bisick who is the company president. Lorraine Gersek's involvement in the construction business began in the 1940s and expanded over time. An active business partner alongside her husband, she continued to direct the business after his death in 1980. Lorraine and Diane are noted for their high standards for integrity, fairness, and quality. At Ed Gersek Inc. they recognize that building a one-on-one relationship with their customers is an integral part of continuing a strong business providing expertise in earthwork, site utilities and aggregates in Northeastern Wisconsin.

## LouAnne Berg | J&L STEEL & ELECTRICAL SERVICES

**J&L Steel**  
**& Electrical Services**  
**2365 Willis Miller Drive**  
**Hudson, WI 54016**  
**715.808.0463**  
**[www.jlsteelinc.com](http://www.jlsteelinc.com)**

Lou Anne Berg was a single mom on welfare taking recordkeeping and business classes—never imagining she would someday borrow \$1000 from her mom and start a steel erection company. In 1977, at age 26, she started J&L, with her former husband, as a steel erection business. As a young, female business-owner in the male-dominated construction industry, she faced and overcame many obstacles. Her colleagues note that she persevered with integrity and sound business decisions to earn the respect of many contractors, suppliers and industry leaders. She was a subcontractor rebuilding I-35W after the collapse. In 2008, J&L expanded into electrical services. LouAnne has received numerous industry honors and is a founder of the Association of Women Contractors. LouAnne is the 2012 incoming president of the Hudson Chamber of Commerce. *Nominated by Senator Sheila Harsdorf.*

### **JAMES IMAGING SYSTEMS, INC. | Lola Tegeder**

James Imaging Systems, Inc. is a family-owned provider of integrated document technologies. Lola's husband, James, was one of the founders of the company in 1977 and she took over its leadership after his death in 1984. Under her stewardship, James Imaging Systems has grown substantially and now serves an eight-county area. They specialize in the sales, leasing and servicing of multifunctional copiers, fax machines, and wide format and laser printers. They also consult on print fleet management to optimize workflow and reduce costs. "We provide equipment and advice that streamlines a company's information workflow and enables them to run their business more profitably and efficiently." *Nominated by Kate Hill, Heartland Information Research, Inc.*

**James Imaging Systems, Inc.**  
**PO Box 330**  
**Brookfield, WI 53008**  
**262.761.7700**  
**[www.jamesimaging.com](http://www.jamesimaging.com)**

### **KUJAWA ENTERPRISES, INC. (KEI) | Sally Kujawa**

Founded in 1964, Kujawa Enterprises, Inc. (KEI) is a four- season, full-service landscape management and snow and ice control company serving Southeastern Wisconsin. KEI has been ranked as a top contractor by numerous industry publications and was named to the Inc. Magazine's list of the fastest growing companies in America. Sally has been recognized nationally as a pioneer in developing and using computer applications and applying technology to the landscape industry. Sally was a co-founder of the company and currently serves as CEO and Chairman of the Board. KEI also gives back to its community, including establishing and operating a training and job placement program for disadvantaged youth, as well as contributions to scholarship funds and garden and landscaping projects in public spaces. *Nominated by Barbara Scheibe, Wisconsin Landscape Contractors Association.*

**Kujawa Enterprises, Inc.**  
**824 E. Rawson Ave.**  
**Oak Creek, WI 53154**  
**414.766.1900**  
**[www.KEIorange.com](http://www.KEIorange.com)**

# Business Pioneer Awards

## Marsha Lindsay | LINDSAY, STONE & BRIGGS

Founded in 1978, Lindsay, Stone & Briggs's specialty is revitalizing and turning around stalled brands and successfully launching new-to-the-world products, brands and categories. Marsha's expertise goes back to her founding of LSB in 1978, when, as a graduate student at UW-Madison, she started applying her research in brand positioning strategy and what's now called behavioral economics to real-world marketing challenges. Today, companies from all over the world seek out LSB to tackle issues others have been unable to solve. Before her firm was even 10 years old she was named Wisconsin Entrepreneur of the Year. In 2005, she was honored by the International Women's Forum as one of nine "making a difference" in the world. Marsha is active in professional, civic and community organizations. *Nominated by Vickie Wenzel, Target Commercial Interiors.*

**Lindsay, Stone & Briggs**  
**One South Pinckney St.**  
**Madison, WI 53703**  
**608.251.7070**  
**www.LSB.com**

## Mary Van Lare | MJ CARE, INC.

After graduating from the University of Michigan's Physical Therapy Program in 1967, Mary (Jensen) Van Lare worked in 12 different positions over a 10 year period, moving through three states, following her husband as he kept changing jobs. Finally, in Wisconsin, she was so frustrated with the way her bosses treated therapists that she felt "led by God" to go out "on her own," with her 17 year old therapy aide to assist her. Today, almost 35 years later, MJ Care is one of the 10 largest women-owned businesses in Wisconsin with over 375 associates providing Medicaid billing programs for schools in Wisconsin and Iowa; long term care rehab in Wisconsin; rehab staffing of Veterans Administration hospitals in Wisconsin and Indiana; and rehab staffing in schools in Wisconsin and Illinois. *Nominated by Ann Dietrich, Wisconsin Physical Therapy Association.*

**MJ Care, Inc.**  
**2448 S. 102nd Street**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53227**  
**414.349.1879**  
**www.mjcare.com**



## 2100 LATHROP, INC. (McDONALDS) | Dorothy Metz

A coal miner's daughter, Dottie Metz grew up in Virginia and moved to Chicago right out of high school. Her second marriage, to Richard Metz, brought her to Racine, Wisconsin, and the start of a new career working in the family business – the McDonald's at 21st and Lathrop in Racine. Opening in 1957 and purchased by Richard Metz in 1959, it was the first McDonalds in the state of Wisconsin and the seventh in the nation! Today, Dottie Metz owns 2100 Lathrop, Inc., which includes six area McDonalds, including the original restaurant, and employs more than 400 workers. Dottie notes that she is proud to be the first employer for many area youth, many of whom come back to see her years later. Indeed all of her managers grew up, building their own careers, in the restaurant with her. "I love 'my kids' – I love seeing these young people accomplish something and move forward in life," said Dottie Metz.

*Nominated by Senator Van Wanggaard.*

**2100 Lathrop, Inc.  
(dba McDonalds)  
2200 Lathrop Ave.  
Racine, WI 53405  
262.497.8225**

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*"Private sector businesses are key to our state's job creation strategies. We are fortunate to have many women who have started a business and now employ their fellow Wisconsinites. I hope that these Trailblazers can serve as role models to other women who are considering opening a business and creating jobs."*

Governor Scott Walker

# Special Recognition Awards

Nominated by the Wisconsin Women's Business Initiative Corporation (WWBIC), these businesses are recognized for their trailblazing entrepreneurial spirit, as evidenced by business innovation and success, and a personal commitment to the community.

WWBIC is the largest micro-lender in Wisconsin and the leading resource for women, minority, and low-income entrepreneurs. Operating statewide, WWBIC provides direct loans and access to other business capital; business education, training, and one-on-one assistance; and economic literacy education and support.

## **Kate Hill | HEARTLAND INFORMATION RESEARCH, INC.**

**Heartland Information  
Research, Inc.  
6434 W. North Ave.  
Wauwatosa, WI 53213  
414.727.2095  
[www.hirservices.com](http://www.hirservices.com)**

Heartland Information Research, Inc. offers management consulting and special project services to government agencies, owner-managed businesses, and nonprofits. Founded in 1999, HIR has grown from a startup in the WWBIC business incubator to serving clients statewide from a company-owned facility. Kate's philosophy to "help people or find resources that will" creates public/private sector collaborative working environments that leverage existing resources to maximize results while minimizing lead-times and costs. HIR supports a variety of business and community organizations with volunteered time for speaking engagements, workshops, and organizational development. Kate is a founding board member of the Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce, and a director of the Milwaukee Yacht Club leading community outreach initiatives.

*The Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business would not*

**Office of  
the Governor**  
State Capitol  
608.266.1212  
[www.walker.wi.gov](http://www.walker.wi.gov)

**Office of  
the Lt. Governor**  
State Capitol  
608.266.3516  
[www.ltgov.state.wi.us](http://www.ltgov.state.wi.us)

**Wisconsin  
Women's Council**  
Madison, WI  
608.266.2219  
[www.womenscouncil.wi.gov](http://www.womenscouncil.wi.gov)

**Women's Business  
Enterprise (WBE)  
Certification Program**  
Madison, WI  
608.267.0297  
[www.doa.state.wi.us](http://www.doa.state.wi.us)

## **INSIDER NEWS WISCONSIN | Yolanda James**

Yolanda James assumed ownership of the Insider News Wisconsin (INW) in March 2010. The newspaper is a free publication that targets the African American community in the Racine/Kenosha area. It features stories, community events, social issues, and advertisements that are pertinent to this population. The INW is released on the 1st & 15th of each month and has gathered a pass on readership of over 35,000 in this special niche market. It has been in the community for over 15 years and is widely used by advertisers, politicians, community leaders, pastors, non-profit organizations, and members of the community.

**Insider News Wisconsin**  
**3001 Douglas Ave.**  
**Racine, WI 53402**  
**262.681.2345**  
**insiderwisconsin.com**

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## **ZOE ENGINEERING, LLC | Daphne Wilson**

Founded in 1999, Zoe Engineering, provides electrical power, instrumentation and controls and plant automation engineering services. The company was conceived out of a mission to serve a pre-existing and ongoing relationship in the local Municipal Water/ Wastewater and Power Generation markets. Since its inception, Zoe has expanded its services to include the Commercial, Industrial, Health Care, and Educational markets. Since 2003, Ms. Wilson has received continued support from WWBIC and has taken advantage of the numerous services WWBIC provides, including business and financial consultations and their well-recognized loan program, which has allowed Zoe to maintain its employees.

**Zoe Engineering, LLC.**  
**1126 S. 70th St.**  
**Milwaukee, WI 53214**  
**414.475.2715**  
**www.ZoeEng.com**

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**M&I, A part of BMO**  
**Financial Group**  
Milwaukee, WI  
1.888.464.5463  
[www.mibank.com](http://www.mibank.com)

**WWBIC**  
Milwaukee, WI  
414.263.5450  
[www.wwbic.com](http://www.wwbic.com)

**The WIDGET Source**  
Madison, WI  
608.233.1763  
[www.thewidgetsource.com](http://www.thewidgetsource.com)  
*WBE Certified*

**Wisconsin**  
**Manufacturers and**  
**Commerce (WMC)**  
Madison, WI  
608.258.3400  
[www.wmc.org](http://www.wmc.org)

# Governor's Trailblazer Awards for Women in Business

Award Program  
Wisconsin State Capitol  
March 28, 2012

## Welcome

Mary Jo Baas, Chair  
Wisconsin Women's Council

Jonathan Barry, Deputy Secretary  
Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development

## Presentation of Awards Governor Scott Walker

*Following the presentation of awards,  
award recipients are asked to move to the  
front of the room for a group photograph.*